

1) Right aims of action

Tibetan: ཡང་དག་པའི་ལས་ཀྱི་མཐའ། - *Yang-dag-pa'i lae kyi tha* (*lae kyi tha* = aims of action)

2) Right livelihood

Tibetan: ཡང་དག་པའི་འཚོ་བ། - *Yang-dag-pa'i tso-wa* (*tso-wa* = livelihood)

3) Right effort

Tibetan: ཡང་དག་པའི་རྩོལ་བ། - *Yang-dag-pa'i tsoel-wa* (*tsoel-wa* = effort)




4) Right mindfulness

Tibetan: ཡང་དག་པའི་དྲན་པ། - *Yang-dag-pa'i dren-pa* (*dren-pa* = mindfulness/remembrance)

5) Right concentration

Tibetan: ཡང་དག་པའི་དྲིང་ངེ་འཛིན། - *Yang-dag-pa'i ding-nge-dzin* (*ding-nge-dzin* = concentration/meditative stabilization)

The way in which the eight-fold path is included in the three trainings:

The training of ethics	The training of concentration	The training of wisdom
		
Right speech Right action Right livelihood	Right effort Right mindfulness Right concentration	Right view Right thought

The five paths are:

1. Path of accumulation
2. Path of preparation
3. Path of seeing
4. Path of meditation
5. Path of no more learning

1. Path of accumulation

Tibetan: ཚོགས་ལམ། - *Tsog-lam* (*Tsog* = accumulation/collection/gathering, *lam* = path)

In order to attain liberation from cyclic existence practitioners need to first enter the Hinayana path of accumulation. The criterion for entering that path is to generate the sincere and spontaneous aspiration to overcome cyclic existence and become an Arhat. Such aspiration can only arise after intense and prolonged contemplation of the shortcomings and the suffering nature of our existence. Once practitioners have cultivated the path of accumulation they need to accumulate sufficient merit and wisdom to be able to proceed. This is the reason for calling this path the path of *accumulation*. Furthermore, they need to generate an inferential cognizer realizing the emptiness of inherent existence. In other words, unless practitioners realized emptiness *before* they entered the path of accumulation, they must now reflect on the various reasons that establish the ultimate nature of reality until they are able to infer the lack of inherent existence of phenomena and thereby newly and conceptually realize emptiness. On top of that practitioners must develop *calm abiding*, a special concentration that is able to focus uninterruptedly on an internal object with calmness, clarity, and intensity for at least four hours. Following that, calm abiding and the analytical meditation that is a conceptual consciousness realizing emptiness are harmonized by alternating from one to the other.

2. Path of preparation

Tibetan: རྟོག་ལམ། - *Jor-lam* (*Jor* = preparation/application)

The criterion for entering the path of preparation is when practitioners newly attain a union of calm abiding and special insight taking emptiness as the object. The union refers to two awarenesses, calm abiding and special insight, arising simultaneously in union, both realizing emptiness. That means that calm-abiding, the one-pointed awareness realizing emptiness, and special insight, the thorough discrimination of emptiness, operate parallel at the same time, with equal power, one assisting the other. This enables the practitioner to gain a deep, clear and intense realization of emptiness free from mental distraction and mental sinking.

However, this union of calm abiding and special insight is a *conceptual* consciousness and therefore unable to act as a direct antidote to any of the afflictive obstructions.

When practitioners arise from the realization of emptiness they also engage in the accumulation of merit by practicing of love, compassion, generosity, and so forth.

Since it serves as a preparation for the path of seeing, i.e. for realizing emptiness directly, this path is called path of *preparation*.

3. Path of seeing

Tibetan: མཐོང་ལམ། - *Thong-lam* (*Thong* = see/perceive)

The criterion for entering the path of seeing is the cultivation of a union of calm abiding and special insight that realizes emptiness *directly*. To such an awareness all appearances of subject and object become inseparable, like water being poured into water. The mind that realizes emptiness directly is a meditative absorption that when it manifests in practitioners' continua completely removes -- during one meditative session -- the intellectually acquired afflictive obstructions, such as ignorance, its seed, etc. acquired from contact with false systems.

However, during the path of seeing practitioners are not merely absorbed in the wisdom that realizes emptiness but also accumulate merit by practicing love, generosity, patience, and so forth.

Since this path is obtained when practitioners are able to generate the wisdom that is able to *see* emptiness directly it is called path of *seeing*.

4. Path of meditation

Tibetan: རྟོག་ལམ། - *Gom-lam* (*Gom* = meditation/contemplation)

The path of meditation is obtained when practitioners have familiarized with the meditative absorption that directly realizes emptiness and in that way strengthened its ability to now remove the innate afflictive obstructions. Therefore, every time the meditative absorption in the continua of practitioners on the path of meditation manifests it eliminates one of the different layers of the innate afflictive obstructions. When practitioners arise from the meditative absorptions they continue to accumulate merit by deepening their love, compassion, and so forth.

5. Path of no more learning

Tibetan: མི་རྟོག་ལམ། - *Mi-lob-lam* (*mi* = no, *lob* = learn/train)

The path of no more learning is obtained after the subtlest afflictive obstructions have been removed. Practitioners who reached this path have attained the truth of cessation of afflictive obstructions, liberation, and Nirvana and have become Arhats.

This concludes a brief presentation of the four noble truths. Please note that all the explanations are given from the point of view of the Hinayana or Fundamental Vehicle. An explanation of the four noble truths from the point of view of the Mahayana or Universal Vehicle will be given below.

